

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the amendments made to the claims and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

No claims are currently being added or canceled.

Claim 10 has been amended to remove a reference number from that claim. The scope of claim 10 has been unaffected.

This amendment and reply amends a claim in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claims remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Claims 1-11 are currently pending in this application.

Indication of Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicant appreciates the indication of allowable subject matter made in the Office Action with respect to claims 2-4 and 6-10.

Claim Rejections – Prior Art:

In the Office Action, claims 1, 5 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by 10-141921 to Sato Yoshihiro (Applicant's admitted prior art). This rejection is traversed for the reasons given below.

The Office Action asserts that page 3, paragraph 0013 of the Sato reference discloses a smear edge detecting section that detects edge positions of a smear from a region of the generated edge image which is determined on the basis of a previously detected position of a white line on the road surface.

Applicant respectfully disagrees. In particular, paragraph 0013 of the Sato reference merely teaches the detection of a smear region which is a high luminance region.

Furthermore, the Sato reference does not disclose or suggest a smear edge detecting section that detects smear edge positions from a generated edge image region which is determined on the basis of a previously detected position of a white line on a road surface, as explicitly recited in claim 1, claim 5 (as a detecting step), and claim 11 (as a smear edge

detecting means). The smear edge detecting section is described in the specification as reference numeral 19 in Figure 1 and steps S20 through S100 in Figure 3.

Accordingly, claims 1, 5 and 11 are not anticipated by the Sato reference.

Conclusion:

Since all of the issues raised in the Office Action have been addressed in this Amendment and Reply, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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